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A CHARGE

DELIVERED AT

THE ORDINARY VISITATION

OF THE

ARCHDEACONRY OF CHICHESTER

IN JULY, 1843.

BY

HENRY EDWARD MANNING, M.A.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER.

SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET:

AND WILLIAM HAYLEY MASON, CHICHESTER.

—
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TO
THE CLERGY
OF
THE ARCHDEACONRY OF CHICHESTER,

This Charge,

PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS INSCRIBED

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE BROTHER AND SERVANT,

H. E. M.

A C H A R G E,

§c. §c.

MY REVEREND BRETHERN,

I did not expect to meet you in Visitation this year; I had hoped that the Bishop of the diocese might have been permitted to discharge this office in person: but it has been otherwise ordered, and I ought not to regret it. Let me rather say, that for certain reasons I may rejoice at it; and ask you to give me your attention while I state my meaning somewhat more at large.

Let me first speak of the private reasons which make this day of Visitation of more than common interest to myself: that I may then dismiss them, and pass on to matters of a more important, because of a less local and personal kind.

At the Visitation held in this place in the year 1841, I gave notice of my intention to visit in person the parishes within the jurisdiction of the Archdeacon of Chichester. I am able now to say that my intention has been fulfilled. Since that time I have held Visitations in about 130 several parishes;

and, to the best of my power, I have examined, with the assistance of the Rural Deans, Clergy, and Churchwardens, the Churches and Ecclesiastical Property committed to their charge. It might seem natural that I should on this occasion lay before you some of the results of my Visitation. But it is not my intention to do so at this time. It would be of little use, unless I were to go into details; and if I were to go into details, I should detain you too long. I shall, therefore, as I trust, in the course of this year, draw up, in a separate form, for the use of the Churchwardens of this Archdeaconry, certain suggestions and directions which appear to me to be necessary.

I must, however, express the great satisfaction I feel at the progress which is making in the restoration of our Parish Churches.

Before many years, the office of Churchwarden, which has been sometimes so much slighted, and not seldom blameably undertaken only to be neglected, will be sought after as one that brings a man into relation with holier things than the toils and trades of this world, and will be discharged, I trust and believe, in a spirit of gladness and piety. To you, brethren, who now bear this office, I desire to say, that I am not ignorant of the difficulties you have to contend with. They that have been Churchwardens before you, by their neglect, have doubled your present burdens; they that have gone on the

wicked maxim of doing to the Parish Church as little as ever they can, which has always ended in doing very much less than they ought; and they that have taught their fellow parishioners to give the least sums grudgingly, by doing the greatest duties meanly—these are they who have bequeathed to you neglected Churches and unwilling rate-payers. I am aware, too, that the property on which the assessment falls has been affected by the general course of events around us, and that difficulties beset your office now, which in the last generation were but little known. I am, therefore, chiefly anxious on one point alone; and that is, to receive from you a full and clear assurance that you will steadily set yourselves to fulfil the duties of your office according to your powers and opportunities. For the rest I am willing to wait; and I do so in the confident belief that the Parish Churches of this Archdeaconry in a few years will have undergone a thorough repair. Extensive restorations have been made, at a considerable cost, in about eighteen Churches within the last few years. Of course I am not speaking of the common outlay on necessary repairs, or even of lesser restorations, which are still more numerous. I must, therefore, express my satisfaction at the cheerful and trusty manner in which the Churchwardens, as a body, have acted since I had the official duty of overseeing them. I say, as a body,

that I may not use indiscriminate, and, therefore, empty, terms of commendation. In a number of upwards of two hundred men, all cannot be alike; all will not have the same knowledge of their office, the same sense of duty, the same religious feeling for the House and worship of God. They will possess various degrees of intelligence, ability, conscientiousness, and religion; and they will vary in the fulfilment of their office in proportion as they are various in their qualifications for its discharge. I have had to deal with some who are qualified in a high degree for their duties; with others who had thought little of the declaration and promise you are going to make here to-day. But in all my official intercourse I have in no single instance been constrained to compel the fulfilment of duty by force of law. My steadfast resolution was to try first every other means: to appeal to conscience and sense of Christian duty; to remind you that your promise, made here before me in the sight of God, is all one with the most solemn oath; and I am thankful to say that this appeal has been fully answered. Not only has no case for legal steps arisen; but I am satisfied, will not arise. I have endeavoured to show you that the due and seemly maintenance of the House and worship of God is not so much a duty as a privilege; not a burden, but a blessing: and to appeal to you as trustees of things sacred to God, in behalf of yourselves and of

your children. I had rather win you to fulfil your duties freely, and of a willing mind, than obtain the most exact obedience to legal orders and directions; and I would, therefore, again remind you that there is a contradiction between the man and the office, when any one discharges the duties of Churchwarden with a narrow, grudging, and penurious heart. If we can bear to see our Parish Church damp, slovenly, decaying, or patched up with cheap, paltry repairs; if we can endure to argue and object, and put off our duty from year to year, or to try and throw on others what we ought to do ourselves; if we can go on thinking anything good enough for the Parish Church, while we spend ten or a hundred-fold more every year upon our own dwellings, our comforts, refinements, self-indulgence; then it is plain as day that we have an anxious care for this world and for ourselves, and, say what we may, little or no real love or faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The day will come again, I firmly believe it, when the Parish Church shall once more bear its witness to village piety; when its old hoar walls shall tell, by many a token, the religious care of pastor and flock for their Father's House; and the seemly decorations within shall bespeak the diligent tendance, and grateful offerings of devout and thankful hands. There can be no brighter vision of a glad and peaceful life than an English village lying round its churchyard pale, where the affec-

tions of a hundred homes are buried side by side. What a mystery of love and unity is there; what a grandeur and pathos of sure and simple faith. The village Church and its mellow chimes, the village tree and the village festival, are thoughts which refresh us even now in the dry and glaring age in which we live and toil. What elements of a happy life, withdrawn from the tumultuous world, still linger among us. Our ten thousand village Churches, and the parochial system of which they are the life, have in them a virtue of power to change this laboured and distracted land to be merry England once more. What a homestead of Christian peace may you make for yourselves, for the aged and poor, the sick and weary, the widowed and world-worn, in your Parish Church, and the sacred precincts which compass it about. Who can say how much is in your hands? If you make the House of God beautiful and honourable in the eyes of your brethren, who can measure the help you give to your pastor's work? Yours is no light charge; no mere secular office: it is related to the holiest things. I pray you to use it well. Guard the House of God with a dutiful and loving care. And if the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom for the Ark's sake, while it tarried with him, believe that He will not forget your love and reverence to His sanctuary. Your year of office will be soon over, and with it the opportunity; and perhaps the blessing will pass to other hands. Use it well then; as men that would win

a blessing of the Lord ; remembering how He hath said—“Them that honour me, I will honour ; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.” I have, therefore, addressed you, brethren, as men to whom I should do a wrong if I were to believe that you had less desire to do your duty towards God in your office than I have in my own ; and I am thankful that I have done so ; and am persuaded that, as habits of obedience, reverence, and conscientiousness grow in us, we shall on both sides find a growing desire to fulfil our duties towards God in maintaining His House and worship with all needful and seemly provision. I take this opportunity of thanking the body of Churchwardens for their attention and kindness towards myself personally ; and, what is of more moment, for the care and willingness with which they have complied and are still complying with my directions. Of this I have frequent evidences. Within a few days, for instance, one of the Rural Deans of a district visited last year, writes to me :—“I wish to speak of the willing exertions of the Churchwardens in the highest terms. Nothing has been unattended to. When any little matter has not been completed, it has been either from accidental circumstances or from further time having been originally granted.” I could add further testimonies of the same kind, and adduce particular cases worthy of high commendation.

My Parochial Visitations are indeed for the present completed ; but, through the Rural Deans, I shall keep up a hardly less close and particular knowledge of the progress of your repairs. And I shall be at all times ready to renew my visits in person, and to lend the best guidance and advice I can in all matters belonging to your office. All other particulars I will reserve for the letter which I hope soon to address to you.

My Reverend Brethren, this is now the third year that I have spoken in your hearing upon the exterior system of the Church, and upon the minor points of internal order and arrangement. You are aware also that much of my time in the intervals between these public visitations has been bestowed on particulars of this sort. It seems, therefore, almost due to you and not less to myself to explain in a few words the reason why these details have occupied so much of my attention. I may have run the risk of seeming to you to be formal, and to be punctiliously dwelling on the outer side and ceremonial of religion. Had I followed my own inclinations I should not have run any such risk. My own wishes would have led me, I trust, to the inner realities of the Church ; and I can truly say that the mechanical nature of this part of my official duty has been but a shallow source of pleasure to me. If it were right to speak more freely of that which is a part of duty, I should say more. I must,

therefore, plead the necessity of the case. If we would have others do their duty we must do our own. It is no good sign for a man to neglect the least function of his office, and gives us no pledge of diligence in the greatest. I have, therefore, felt myself bound to count nothing within the sphere of official duty to be trivial or unimportant. I confess, too, that I see no propriety in cheap materials and clumsy forms, no laudable simplicity in nakedness and bareness, nor anything congruous with the idea of the Divine presence in faded and scanty furniture, and paltry vessels of a worthless material. The poorest parish Church, and the rudest furniture, if they be the best that can there be had, are raised at once, by the relation in which they stand to Him whom unseen we adore, into an equality with the richest. The most costly, if they are provided to gratify a self-indulgent taste or a fastidious eye, or treated as an integral part of the living and reasonable service of the spirit of man to the Father of Spirits, are depressed in meaning and worth far below the rudest. The worship of the Church never pierced the heaven with greater energy, nor found more acceptance on high, than when it went up from upper-chambers and from catacombs. But we are in no danger of mistaking the outward array for the inner life of the Church, of putting architectural exactness for the sacrifice of a devout spirit, and zeal about points of order for living fellowship with God and earnest toil for the elect's sake. Christian art is

a beautiful thing, and worthy of our attention ; and great care in these lesser things pledges us to greater care for greater things. If we bestow so much diligence on the form, what ought we not to give to the life itself? They, like the material and spiritual worlds, are closely related, though distinct. Let us not disjoin them, or array them in a mistaken and mischievous opposition ; but give to both such a share of our thoughts as either may demand. But our carefulness about lesser things shall be openly seen to be of another kind and intensity. And we have especial need to be on our guard at the present moment, though not, indeed, for ourselves. We seem to be upon the brink of another passage in the history of the English Church, when they that would sever the hearts of the people from her are labouring hard to make them despise her as a system of hollow and lifeless ceremonial. The destinies of the Church, under God, depend on the reality and force of our pastoral character. If unity could be gained by it, we would go again into the upper chambers. The Church would never refuse to return to those days when her " chalices were of wood," and her " priests of gold ;" and this is the truth we have now to make our opponents understand.

Every year we meet in this place must, I think, bring with it more and more convincing proofs that the Church of this land is destined to fulfil a great work in the Gospel of our Lord, both within and

beyond the precincts of the British empire. Since we last met here, four Bishops have been added to our communion abroad, making an Episcopate of fifteen members. Every month brings us evidence of the reality and extension of the work of the Church in our Colonial dioceses. The Church of England is making herself known and felt as a spiritual kingdom in all parts of the earth; and there must needs be at home some intense life and energetic power which can throw out its influence through so remote a sphere. When any one talks to us of dangers and divisions, let the extension of our communion suffice to show, that what are mistaken for dangers and divisions, are chiefly the efforts of inward power necessary to all great actions and movements of the Church. I am firmly persuaded that the last three centuries have opened a new era, so to speak, in the history of Christendom; and that the basis of doctrine and discipline which has been vindicated by this branch of the Church Catholic is destined to be the basis of unity to the Church of the next ages. Already it has made itself felt where we might least expect to find it; and they that leave little unsaid against us, have silently approximated to the theory and rule of the Church of England. This is our foundation, and on it, and from it, we have to work. The first condition of our usefulness at this day is this,—a steadfast and thorough faith in the life and truth of the Church of England; and that not as a successful controversial

dogma, but as a consciousness which is inseparable from our spiritual life. Now it is most certain that the outward relations and worldly circumstances of the Church of England have, within our memory, undergone extensive changes: and we have entered upon an earnest contest with conflicting sects and principles, in which formularies and systems on paper, our traditionary precedence and national character, the number of our people, and the public recognition of our clergy, will avail us little. These are not our weapons, but our positions; we have not to contend with them, but for them: they are points of vantage, but they must be defended; and our weapons and our defence must be in and of ourselves. But of this I will say a few words hereafter.

I will now refer shortly, and in a general way, to the change which seems to have passed upon our outward circumstances, and then to certain subjects of a religious or ecclesiastical sort which have been brought before the Legislature since we last met in Visitation.

The Christian Church may be said to have had three periods in relation to the civil powers of the world: the first, when it was approaching to amity and alliance; the second, when, though still distinct itself, it became incorporated with the temporal state; and the last, when the temporal powers began to recede from the spiritual. The last seems to be at this day the state of the Church throughout the world;

less so, perhaps, with few exceptions, in this country than any other. Still it seems certain that the relation in which the Spirituality of England stands to the Temporal Legislature at this day, differs from its relation under the Tudors and the Stuarts. Since the time of Elizabeth dissent has become an established ingredient in the country, and now of the legislature. This change of relation appears to be the design of God's Providence, and no doubt is so ordered for wise purposes, as yet unfolded only in part. It may be the essential condition of our extension as a church of many nations, that the rigid character of our national system should be relaxed, and of our greater internal power of self-expansion that the restricting protection of other days should be withdrawn. There can be no doubt that this alteration of our state was precipitated by the changes in the law in 1828 and 1829; by the sympathetic action of ecclesiastical questions in Ireland upon this country; by the unsettlement of the oldest consecrated property in England; and by the suspension of the powers by which the Church, as a church incorporated with the state, enforced her own order and discipline. I am not speaking of these as desiring to reverse acts that are past, but to illustrate the change which is passing upon our condition, and thereby to show the line in which the Church will probably henceforward advance, and the duties which consequently lie upon ourselves.

It is obvious that the same political necessity which opened the legislature to persons not in communion with the Church, has imposed its control upon the course of legislation, and on the action of the executive government, which must always largely sympathize with the composition of the legislature. For this reason we shall be wise if we give over looking to the civil power for measures conceived in the spirit, and carried out with the freedom, of the times, before those changes came upon us. I do not say whether such measures are to be desired or no ; whether the cessation of them is to be regretted or no ; but I simply point to the fact, that whether desired or regretted they seem no longer possible. We must prepare ourselves for a new complexion in the measures which affect the moral and religious state of the country. This, at least, we may both ask and expect, first, that all measures drawn for the Church shall be framed upon her own principles, and administered according to the genius of her system ; and, next, that in all other measures affecting the religious and moral state of the people, as little departure as possible from her principles, or rather as close an approximation as possible to them, shall be made.

To come to particulars, I would first refer to the clauses relating to education in the Factory Bill.

It may be said with truth that the subject of National Education has been under discussion these thirty or forty years. The opening of the subject

may be said to be in the years preceding the formation of the National Society. It was then an undertaking of a voluntary sort, independent of the Legislature, or of Government; maintained, as it had been instituted, by private persons, and by societies. The necessity of providing education for the people was thereby recognized and recorded, though not by the State as such. Attempts were subsequently made to obtain acts of the Legislature for National Education; but, for various reasons, they failed of success. Government contented itself with making grants from the Treasury in aid of individual exertion, on application of the two education societies. So the case stood until the year 1839, when an attempt, fresh in the memory of us all, was made to introduce a system of education which should comprehend the children of parents differing in religious belief. This attempt likewise failed, chiefly because it went to separate the higher and lower elements of education, and to provide a mutilated system, in which religious truth was compromised or excluded. There is no one who does not familiarly know the course and result of the eventful contest between the Church and the then Government. It was successfully maintained that no education for the people could be accepted which should be wanting in its religious character, or withdrawn from the oversight of the English clergy. While this controversy was going on, the Church organized

her own system. The Bishops invited the clergy and laity of their dioceses to meet and publicly undertake the duty of educating the people. Boards of education, with local boards acting under them, were formed in twenty-one dioceses. Twenty-four institutions or colleges, for training schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, have been formed: 221 teachers have been received and instructed in them; 134 have been appointed to situations; 200 teachers, already employed, have been received by the National Society to improve themselves in their office. In the four last years the National Society by its own funds, and the proceeds of the Queen's Letter, has expended 83,000*l.* The diocesan funds since 1838 have amounted to 94,000*l.* The committee of subscription and correspondence, acting under the National Society, raised about 50,000*l.*; so that no less a sum than between two and three hundred thousand pounds (exclusive of the outlay made privately in forming and maintaining schools, which cannot be ascertained) has been expended by the Church on education since the year 1838. The number of schools in the communion of the Church may be taken at about 18,000; and of scholars, at 1,193,947.*

If we look, therefore, to the extent of this organized system of education, its diocesan machinery,

* Letter on National Education, by the Rev. R. Burgess, pp. 21-26.

its funds, and training institutions, schools of all sorts, the aggregate number of its teachers and scholars, we must be thankfully conscious of possessing a material for the work of education, inadequate indeed to the wants of the people, but still of a most vigorous and efficient kind, capable of indefinite extension and improvement; and this organized system is perpetually extending itself, perpetually thrusting its roots more deeply and widely into the lowest of the people.

If this has been the growth of four years, what may not the next ten produce? We are but in the rudiments of the undertaking. A few years ago we were battling objections against educating the people at all. That point is gained: but men act slowly upon matters where they have been rather silenced than convinced. The full effect of this is to be seen, when they to whom the charge of property has been intrusted begin to fulfil their high duties towards those who with property are also intrusted to their care. They hold a wardship of their fellow-men: and to these, rather than to the Legislature, we ought to look.

Now it is at this stage of the work that a new feature has shown itself. Her Majesty's present advisers, under a deep sense of the terrific state of the factory population, introduced a measure to provide a system of education for those districts. I shall not refer to the details of that measure; but if ever a measure was conceived with honest and

patriotic intentions, framed with equity and forbearance, and introduced with conciliation and kindness, it was the education scheme embodied in the Factory Bill.

I am the readier to acknowledge this, because I for one rejoice at its withdrawal. At the first proposal it seemed more than questionable; afterwards it became still less to be desired: and we may now be thankful that it has been laid aside. I trust it will never be renewed; and have seen with great pleasure that some who are foremost in the question have declared themselves against any new experiments of combined education.

My reasons are, first, because any such scheme of general education would probably end in withdrawing from the Church the education of the English people, and in transferring, at some future day, her schools, teachers, training-colleges, and the whole *matériel* of education to the control of those who may from time to time hold the powers of Government. This appears to be the inevitable though perhaps remote consequence of establishing a system such as that lately proposed. That scheme gave so great an apparent prominence to the Church as to excite from opponents the objection that it was simply a system of Church Education. Had it been carried into effect, it is not to be supposed that it would have been ultimately confined to the factory district: still less is it to be believed that two systems of Church Education should long co-exist. The one would in

time absorb the other; and the ultimate control of both, including, it may be, even the diocesan machinery, &c., would pass into the hands of such ministers as might hereafter, from time to time, by the variable fortunes of political life, compose the Committee of Privy Council.* This involves a principle not to be so easily conceded. If education be essentially a religious work, as it is at length fully acknowledged to be, it does not readily appear where the Church can find a tribunal upon earth to dispense with her obligations to educate her

* By clause 61 of the Factory Bill, dated 7th March, 1843, it was provided that a majority of trustees in any school existing in any place where children reside who work in factories, with the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese, might forward their deeds of trust to the Committee of Council on Education, with a request to be admitted to the benefit of the said Act. The Committee were to be empowered to enable "the Trustees of the said school to adopt the provisions of this Act in regard to the *constitution and regulation* of the said school, assigning the district which shall be liable, according to the provision of this Act, to contribute towards the maintenance thereof; and thenceforward the trustees of the said school shall be appointed, and the said school shall be *regulated*, and the *instruction thereat shall be given*, according to the provisions herein enacted, *notwithstanding the terms of the deed of conveyance may be at variance, and inconsistent with the same.*" This clause stands as No. 70 in the Bill, dated 1st May, and is so far modified as to omit the clause by which the intentions of founders, expressed by their deeds of trust, were to be annulled. It still provides for the reception of all other schools, where such an obstacle does not exist, under the direction of the Committee of Council on Education. But how few are the cases in which the terms of the deeds of trust would contain any precaution. Clause 71 provides for the reception of all schools endowed by voluntary subscription, &c.

own children. If education be the parental office, guided by the pastoral ministry, I know of no authority that can release parents and pastors from their joint charge, and empower them to devolve their office upon any other agents, howsoever efficient or forward to undertake it.

And this brings me to a second reason. We are indebted to those who have chiefly obtained the withdrawal of the clauses in question for establishing, by a counter-proof, what has been so strongly urged by the Church in the last few years, I mean the absolute impossibility, in the present state of the country, of framing any scheme of education, touching upon religion at all, which shall include the children of those who are of separate and opposing communions.

It is impossible to compromise the distinctive characters of those religious systems; and their distinctive characters energetically repel all approaches to united action. It has been a kindly belief, in which I have never participated, that some neutral ground might be discovered—some common precinct—within which their characteristic religious diversities should be unfelt. But surely it must be obvious that religious tenets are the earnest and stirring motives which emphatically govern the whole character. They include all minor differences, and perpetuate them. If men will not worship at the same altar, is it to be thought they will entrust their children to the same religious educa-

tion? Surely we should think less well of them if they would. Laxity is a thing worthy of no respect: rather it is worthy of all condemnation. When men are irreconcilably divided in the highest article of conscience and duty, a willingness to compromise in detail, or in the persons of their children, is no sign of good. It is a poor evidence of reality and earnestness; and of all things the most intolerable is laxity, and indifference in matters which relate to God. Little good could be hoped from a people in whom their religious faith had no deeper or more clinging root: therefore I think there is encouragement to be drawn even from the stubbornness of our contending principles. It bespeaks zeal and energy, and a strong perception of the greatness of the cause about which we are contending. If we are ever again united, this is a pledge of a close and tenacious unity: a lax people must always be divided. Now the discussion of 1839 proved, once for all, that no system of education can be established in this country which is not based on religion, and presided over by the Church. And the discussion of this year has made equally clear that no measure fulfilling these two conditions will satisfy those that are in separation from our communion. The conclusion then is plain, that no combined system of education is practicable.

It only remains, therefore, to these *several* communities to do *severally* what they will not do together: and surely this is what we most desire.

It is bidding God speed to us in the work in which we have been already engaged, and exhibiting in a multiplied light the importance of the organized system and material of education which in the last four years the Church has been steadily forming.

It is not to be denied that the civil powers of any country have a right to call on the Church to do something vigorous and effective for the education of the people. As a matter of political economy education is absolutely required to repress crime, and to imprint the great laws of immutable morality and of natural justice upon a people; and this, if the Church fail, a Government must do in mere self-defence. It is the duty of the civil powers, so long as they profess to maintain relations of amity and communion with the Church, to abstain carefully, in the course of legislation, from all acts which can, even by remote consequences, endanger the purity of its doctrine or discipline. But if it should fail, at any time, to mitigate or to restrain the moral evils, which render a people lawless and ungovernable, it is obvious that the civil ruler must take precautions within his own sphere; and if these precautions be so planned and executed as to thwart the action of the Church, whom shall we have to blame but ourselves? We have to be thankful then for the withdrawal of a scheme, valuable in the judgment of those that framed it, which would have probably contravened the free action of the Church, by anticipating her movements, and

pre-occupying the ground on which she is preparing to form her own lines of operation. It should never be forgotten that it is no question now whether or no the education of the English people is to be committed to the Church. The fact is, that from the preceptor of the Sovereign to the master of the parish-school, the work of education is already in the hands of the Church. Almost all the members of the nobility, higher commonalty, our statesmen, legislators, lawyers, clergy, and members of learned professions, and multitudes who retire into private life, pass through the universities,* or through public or private schools taught by members of the Church. It is calculated that in a population of 16,000,000 about 2,500,000 children of all classes ought to be under education; and that not less than 1,600,000 are actually educated by the Church: of these 1,150,000 are under daily instruction. Of the remainder a large proportion have no education at all. Out of the communion of the Church, in all sects taken together, 550,000 are claimed as Sunday-scholars; but I cannot find that more than 47,287 are under daily instruction.† What then could be more fatal to all hopes of restoring unity to this nation than the introduction of another and an incongruous system of education,

* In one of our universities many of the sons even of Dissenters are educated.

† Educational Statistics, p. 15; and Letter on National Education, p. 26.

which should in the least thwart or obstruct the education which now embraces all, from the highest to the lowest? It would be to drive a wedge of division between the upper and the lower strata of society: to perpetuate and enlarge our present divisions. For that which most stubbornly divides men is diversity of instruction, and the formation of early habits upon opposing or diverse systems.

It is well to make clear, beyond all risk of mistake, what is meant by the education of the country being in the hands of the Church. It does not mean in the hands of the clergy. The function of educating does not inhere in the office of Bishop, Priest, or Deacon as such,* but in the members of the Church as parents, and in the teachers of the Church, trained and appointed for that charge and duty. The function of educating children does not belong to the sacred orders as such, but to all members of the Church, clerical and lay; that is to say, not to a portion of the Church, but to the whole body. In the Church there are not only the orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon, but of Catechist, and Teacher; and of these latter many are not in Holy Orders, but associated with the pastoral ministry in the duty of education. The schools of the Church are not exclusive clerical bodies. The universities, endowed schools, gram-

* I am not speaking of the obligations imposed by Canons of the Church. See a paper by one much loved and lamented in the 'English Journal of Education' for April, 1843, p. 129.

mar-schools, and the like, are administered by the united care of clergy and laity. The great conditions of Church education are not that the teacher should be a clergyman, but that it should be in accordance with the doctrine, and within the communion, of the Church. So far as its Church character is involved, it is a matter of indifference whether the teacher be in Holy Orders or no. Some of the most distinguished preceptors in the ecclesiastical biography of England have been laymen. And it may be said to be one of the properties of the Church of England so to mould the mind and character of her lay-members as to make them eminent even in theology. Your own memories will suggest such names as Nelson, Dodwell, Boyle, King, Hale, and others, in proof. Our theological literature has many excellent works from lay hands, from lawyers, nobles, and statesmen. So manifold and various are the gifts of men, that there must needs be manifold and various offices whereby to give them expression and effect. The office of ruling and presiding over the flock is very different from the office of a parochial cure; the office of spiritual guide is very different from the office of teacher, and so on; and it will often happen that the most efficient parish-priest, and the most experienced spiritual director, may be but indifferently gifted with the peculiar class of abilities which is related to the management of schools; and the best manager of a system of education may,

in like manner, be very scantily furnished with the powers and moral qualities needed for a cure of souls. It is, therefore, a narrow and shallow view to conceive that the clergy are, in virtue of office, charged with the details of schools and parochial education. With the duty of parochial *catechising* the clergy are fully and exclusively charged; and it is their function and privilege, as spiritual guides to their flocks, to *visit, inspect, and promote the welfare* of all schools and systems of education within their parishes. But clear as this is in principle, let us never forget that the question of education must become ultimately a masked form of the question of the pastoral office of the Church; for what is it but the unfolding of the baptismal life in her spiritual children? It is impossible that the education of a country should be in the hands of one power and the pastoral ministry in the hands of another. Though distinct, they are inseparable; and if the pastoral ministry do not draw to itself the work of education, and superintend it, schemes of education will assimilate to themselves the pastoral office, and undermine it, by limiting the action of its catechetical teaching within the range of what is acceptable to a divided population. There are two points which may be laid down as certain: first, that the hearts of the people of England in the next generation are now to be lost and won in the area of our parish schools; and next, that the education of the country will ulti-

mately fall into the hands of that community which has the best and most efficient teachers. Let the Church, then, make her contribution to this work ; and, as an earnest, let us give the careful instruction of 14,000 or 15,000 *catechists*—a contribution which needs no grants of public money, no lists of private subscriptions. We possess it already. The clergy of England are the catechists of England ; and this is the true basis of all national education in this country. Any scheme which thwarts or entangles the free exercise of the catechetical office of the Church is, so far, a pure evil ; any scheme which excludes or slights it is shallow and feeble, and certain of defeat. Who can foretell what a work may be done in a generation by the united action of the whole English clergy acting as the catechists of the nation ; what an order of light and purity may arise out of the darkness and corruption of our mines and factories ; what a restoration of peaceful and paternal rule, of dutiful and glad obedience ; what a healing of intense and inveterate schisms ; what a power of beneficence and of benediction to the whole empire, and to the world.

It is with the highest satisfaction I am able to close this subject by adding, that the heads of the Church have proceeded to seize the opportunity thus afforded, by taking most effective steps towards providing education for the districts specially contemplated in the late clauses, together with the mining population ; and that their undertaking has

the sanction and support of the most illustrious personages and of the highest functionaries in the state. The contributions already given are on a scale without a precedent. Let us realize the greatness of this opportunity, and use it well.

This brings me to the last topic I will touch upon; I mean the Bill now before Parliament "to make better Provision for the spiritual Care of Populous Places." Into its details I need not further enter than to say, that the effect of it is to enable the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales so to anticipate their future revenues as to begin at once to grant sums of 30,000*l.* a-year towards the endowment of new district churches in populous parishes. I refer to this measure for the sake of the important principles involved both in what it does, and in what it does not do. It seems to me to proceed upon the true theory of Church extension; and in that very point which some fasten on as an objection, I seem to see one of its chief recommendations, *i. e.* the fact that it does not carry with it a grant of public money. There can be no doubt, indeed, of the duty of a Christian legislature to apply the revenues of a Christian country to extend the knowledge of Christianity: that I conceive is an axiom. But it is a sound principle to obtain first from the existing ecclesiastical endowments, whether by re-adjustment or by better administration, an increase, if possible, of temporal means for the maintenance and extension of the

Faith : in fact the Christian Church has, at all times, acted upon this principle. In the history of Ecclesiastical revenues will be found precedents of various re-distributions of consecrated property ; and when effected by the lawful authority, and for the greater benefit of Christ's flock, it is a most sound and wholesome act. We find Bede in the eighth century anticipating the acts of the sixteenth, by urgently recommending the increase and endowment of bishoprics out of the monastic revenues.* If the time should come when not only the existing endowments will yield no further increase, but the sway of the Church over the hearts of her people shall fail to incline them to minister to the service of their Lord, then it will be soon enough to seek from legislatures what the free-will offerings of the faithful ought to supply. But by that time a people must be far gone in apostacy. In the present state of the country and of the Church, direct pecuniary aid from Parliament would seem to be undesirable. There is no subject on which the Church contends more feebly than that of money : there is nothing more to be deprecated than the entanglement of the great questions of principle which lie between us and our opponents with declamations and disputes about revenues and taxation. What we would most desire to show to those who separate themselves from the unity of the Church is, that we seek not theirs

* Inett's History of the English Church, vol. i. p. 155.

but them: that all we would exact of them is their conscientious obedience with us to the laws of visible unity under Christ, our Head.

Still less is aid from the public revenue to be desired, on the other ground I have referred to; I mean the condition of the Church itself. It has been our habit too long to look for help abroad when we ought to find it at home. It is strange and sad to see, with what unconsciousness of anything amiss, rich people and wealthy parishes, when they have a new church to build, or an old one to restore, or a school to form, or some such local, and almost personal duty to fulfil, begin by asking how much they can obtain from this or the other society, and by sending far and near for aids to relieve them of their own obligations. In like manner, some would make the Church to lean upon the State; forgetting that this was not the way in which our parish churches were raised and endowed. The true and pure voluntary principle, of which some that know so little clamour so much, is to be found in the self-extension of the Catholic Church. The churches and glebes of our 10,000 parishes are the fruits and the witnesses of the law of free-will oblations; and it is to this principle we must appeal again. If it lie dormant, it can be awakened; if it be extinct, no legislative church-extension will do much for us.

Now, it is precisely because we are beginning to

learn the rudiments of our obligations in this respect that public grants are to be deprecated. The duties which inhere in the blessing of Church-membership, and the responsibilities which wait upon the possession of worldly rank or wealth, are regaining their lost ascendancy in the conscience of England. Most mischievous would be any measure which should throw back this reviving sense of duty ; most pernicious to the very life of the Church, if we were again drawn off from our own energies and self-denying efforts, to rest upon grants from societies and from Parliament. The work of church-extension, as it is called, is a duty attaching locally to every lord of the soil, to every possessor of wealth, to every holder of land, to every employer of labour. Whatsoever invests any man with a beneficial interest in the labour of his fellow-men, binds him to take a paternal care for them as members of Christ. It is a high sin in the sight of Heaven for a man to wring his wealth out of the thews and sinews of his fellows, and to think that, when he has paid them their wages, he has paid them all he owes. He owes them a care as broad as the humanity of which he and they alike partake : as he shall answer at the day of judgment, he may not dare to deal with them as less than members of the body of Christ. The dense masses of our manufacturing towns, the poor families of our agricultural villages, are each one of them related, by the bond of labour and wages,

to some employer, and on him they have a claim for alms, both of body and soul. The appeals to individual energies, by which the Church Endowment Bill was ushered into Parliament, and the recording, in that high place, of the great law which binds the holders of property and employers of labour to assume the charge of their welfare, are of more worth to us than all the thousands that Ecclesiastical Commissioners can borrow of Queen Anne's Bounty.

This subject is so nearly related to the last, that I will for a moment connect them together. If we would promote the education of children, we must ensure the religious instruction of their parents: in a word, if we would have schools, we must build churches. It is beginning at the wrong end to talk of schools for Manchester and Birmingham, until men that are dying day by day possess the means of salvation. Churches draw schools after them. One church in a populous town will soon surround itself with schools of all sorts. But schools do not always bring churches, but rather excite cravings which, if not speedily and adequately met, as they seldom, if ever, are, end in spurious substitutes, religious excitement, and irremediable divisions.

Another great principle advanced at the same time is of even higher importance than the last. It was proposed to promote not the *building* but the *endowment* of churches, and for this reason: because

the oversight and ministry of Christian pastors is more needed than walls of brick and stone. It is a shallow view to confound a multiplication of churches with the extension of the Church. Money and a few builders will extend the material system; but nothing, except the living powers of zeal, self-devotion, purity, and charity, can extend the Church. In fact no power can extend the Church but her own. It must come from within. Without this, our new churches, howsoever many and splendid, will stand empty; but this vital principle will speedily array itself in all due and becoming forms.

It is a waste of money to spend in building churches and schools the revenues that would maintain pastors and teachers. What can be more fallacious than to measure the spiritual condition of our population by the capacity of stone walls? What does the breadth of area in a parish church signify when the parish priest is inefficient or alone? What is needed first is a body of men devoted to Christ's service, who will penetrate into the destitute masses of our neglected people, and in gentleness, self-denial, and prayer, live and die for the poor and outcast of Christ's flock. It will be soon enough to talk of churches and schools when men have been awakened from a debased and godless life; when we have gathered the wandering into a flock, it will then be time to pitch a fold. Every such town and district is a mission in the truest sense.

The recovery of men fallen from Christianity is far more difficult than the conversion of Indian tribes. In these towns there are gathered to a head all the most vivid and obstinate antagonists of the Gospel of Christ: lust of the flesh and of the spirit, beyond all imagination to conceive; apostacy and degradation of the moral being, division, and inveterate enmity, and withal a physical debasement which bars up the avenues of the spiritual life, and makes men unconscious of their immortality as "the beasts that perish:" these are the adversaries with which the Church must gird herself to contend. And let us not deceive ourselves by thinking that she can do this with anything less than her largest and most energetic force. It is not to be done by a handful of pastors without bond or head. Nothing short of the Church, in her fullest strength and unity, can avail. It is precisely in the great towns that the Church is the weakest; from the fact that but yesterday some of them were parishes with a small population, and a single pastor. They have suddenly swelled into populous cities; and the Church has not been able to keep pace with them. The spiritual economy of our large towns is a subject to be classed with that of colonization. It calls in first principles, civil and ecclesiastical, and it must be dealt with as a question of the first magnitude and most urgent importance. Every such town demands nothing less

than the undivided care of a spiritual father, surrounded by a body of devoted pastors, that is, a bishopric. The moral arrear into which we are every year falling is a fearful thought. The kingdom of Satan tarries neither day nor night, confirming its sway of death over our perishing brethren. Every year will they become more impure, estranged, opposed. Let the Church enter upon the field of its spiritual warfare, in apostolic poverty, so it be with apostolic zeal. What she needs at this crisis of her trial is not acts of legislature, and grants of money, but living men, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, wise in the truth, gentle in ruling, makers of peace; sons of consolation, kindled with charity, choosing, above all earthly boons, to spend and to be spent for the souls for whom Christ died.

We have a noble work before us, if we have but faith to set our hand to it. We are upon a manifest trial to see whether or no we have the heart to take up the gage which is thus cast down to us, and to charge ourselves with the Christian education and spiritual care of the people of England. Let us have faith in the divine character and commission of the Church, whose servants we are. How should other men have faith in her, if we have it not ourselves? For my own part, I do not doubt that the Church will both give and redeem these pledges. The tokens of God's favour have of late been more and more visibly upon her: she has her trials; but

there are no trials in her way but such as are her portion upon earth: there are many advantages in her favour, such as few branches of the Catholic body have ever possessed, and perhaps none at this day so fully retain. So far am I from going along with those who are full of their forebodings and alarms. People who hold this language forget that every age has held the same in its day. We are short-sighted, and can only see just before us, and even that imperfectly. What we see in our day we believe to be unlike all that has been until now; that *now* is the crisis to which other times were but tame preludes. So we magnify our own days, and our own parts in them. After all, every age has said the same; and it is now our turn to magnify the importance of our times. Posterity will read us in the context of our ancestors, and we shall be thought as unemphatic and common-place as we think them. The truth is, we are poor judges of our own times, and have but little means of drawing true comparisons. For instance, we hear much of controversies. Now let any man fix a time when the Church has been free from controversy. Is it not with truth and fitness that one of our learned writers arranges the literary history of the Church under the several centuries, distinguishing them as the Gnostic, Novatian, Arian, Nestorian, Eutychian, Monothelite ages, and so on; in fact, by their controversial features? Has not truth always had its foil, and the Faith always been

mocked by a falsehood and an imposture? And this, be it remembered, not external to the Church, but in it. The visible precinct of Christendom, until the evil was cast out, has been the arena of the strife. And at what period in its whole history has it been free from the rivalry of communities or sects claiming to be the true Church? There were rival successions and rival altars even before the Apostles left the earth. And in all periods, even of its most compacted unity, the Church has had to lament the instability of individual minds, and the dropping off of particular members. The case is so now, and always will be. We must deeply lament the fall or perversion of any brother for his own sake. But in any other light such events are highly unimportant. And we shall but embolden our adversaries and weaken ourselves, by giving them a prominence and consideration which they do not deserve. What if twenty-fold more were estranged from us? So it has been before now, and always will be. But the Church of England is the Church of the English people. The millions of our countrymen are, by inheritance, our spiritual flock; and it is an inconsiderate and unreasonable expectation to think that all the manifold antagonist powers, and all the evil agencies of these latter days, now at work to detach our people from us, shall not succeed in a few, yea in many, instances.

There is no country in the world where, with a free toleration of all religious diversities, with a free action of all religious sects, I wish I were not forced to say even with a direct encouragement of religious aggression, the bulk of the people is still so steadfast to the National Church as in England. In countries where toleration is granted, the Church has ceased to be the Church of the nation : in countries where the Church of the nation still contains the whole people, there is no toleration given. It seems, then, that the position of the English Church, and the hold it has over the mass of the people, despite of commerce and controversies, of free and even licentious discussion, of error and all the vices of a luxurious and self-guiding age, is a great and undeniable proof of its reality and energy. It is a remarkable fact that, in other countries of Europe, education has estranged the confidence and attachment of men from the teaching and practice of the Church. It there has hold upon the poor ; but the upper classes bear to it an empty, nominal allegiance. For the most part literature also is severed from faith. In England, on the other hand, where education is fullest, the Church is strongest ; as education has advanced, the Church has rooted itself to a greater depth ; every advance of education will directly confirm the hold of the Church upon the reason and will of the English people. It cannot be said, at least in an agricultural diocese, that it is not the

Church of the poor. And it must be evident to every man that the upper, the literary, and the professional classes are characteristically attached to it.

There is one class, I admit, among whom it has still to mature and extend its spiritual rule—I mean the middle class. And this is the only feature of our present state which, when compared with other ages or other countries, may be called a critical feature of our times.

It is perfectly true that a middle class has existed among us for at least two centuries and a half; and that the same class has ever been the seat of an active spirit which, in times of excitement, has before now been found opposed to the Church. At this day the middle class has attained to a measure of wealth and numbers, and to a vigour of understanding and energy of character, unequalled in earlier times. But it is not penetrated by the pastoral ministry—as the upper class by kindred and association, and the lower by direct instruction and oversight. It is, therefore, open to the inroads of sectarianism, and to theories of all kinds social, religious, and economical. Perhaps in no one region of English society is religious unity so much wanting. It is full of fine gifts and sympathies, with strength of intellect, great activity, solid love of truth, justice, reality, and manhood. These are the elements of a noble character, capable of great things in the ministry of Christ's kingdom. Now

these will be either for us or against us, according as we draw them into communion and brotherhood with ourselves. This, then, is the critical element of our day. All other difficulties and contentions, political and theological; all changes in our ecclesiastical system, and in the statute law as it affects the Church; are light and transient compared with the fact that, between the lowest and the highest of our people, there is a class numerous, wealthy, active, powerful, among whom the Church partly has neglected, and partly has been unable, to discharge her pastoral office.

Believing, then, that we are servants of a system divinely appointed to organize and unite mankind on the basis of truth, and in relations of charity and peace, we can have no doubt that it is precisely such a system as is most needed in the classes I have spoken of; and that, when it has scope to use its free persuasions to unity and truth, it will prevail. We may confidently expect, if no unforeseen antagonists arise to overthrow our public peace, that the Church is destined to redress the divisions, and to heal the sores of these kingdoms. But, under God, the whole issue depends upon ourselves, upon our laity and clergy, but chiefly upon us.

It is not for me to say much on such a point, but some few words (as I promised at the outset) I will venture before I have done. It seems then, first, to be absolutely necessary that we should make the

Church felt to be not a name, a paper system, a theory of hierarchical government, but a living, earnest, beneficent reality. The people with whom we have to do are a real and earnest people. The wants and cravings of their intellectual and spiritual natures are also real; they abhor forms without life, and usages without a meaning. Claims of authority, without the warrant of perceptible powers to justify and explain them, merely challenge their rebellion: dogmatic formularies, without an energetic realization in practice, simply provoke their unbelief. Of all things the least likely to win the hearts of such a people as the English is a church without the energies of charity and the cross. It is not by controversies, nor by sermons on disputed claims, but by love and self-denial, that we must expound the meaning of Christ's Gospel and the duty of visible unity. We must *be* the thing we *preach*, before they will believe us. And their jealous rejection of all empty pretences and unmeaning formalities is the surest pledge to us that the unfailing key to their hearts is the reality of our own. Besides all this, surely there can be no greater slight, no higher indignity put upon the mystical body of Christ, than to misrepresent it to a people as a theory of church-government, a system of doctrine remote from human nature, or a scheme of forms and practices without living unity, without a supreme idea. Of all things on earth the Church is the most real, and

absolute. It is framed in accordance with the universal nature of mankind; it is endowed with virtues of the Holy Ghost to heal all human ills; to counterwork the fall of the world in all its consequences and causes; its doctrine is a perfect harmony with the illuminated reason, being a reflection of the Eternal Truth; it is in universal sympathy with the whole being of mankind in all acts and sufferings of soul and body, being the channel and expression of the perfect sympathy of Him, "who for us men and for our salvation . . . was made Man," and "learned obedience by the things that He suffered."

This then is the system we are ordained to body forth to the sight and consciousness of our fellow-countrymen. And how shall we do this? Not, most assuredly, by opposition among ourselves, nor by books, nor by the whole apparatus of paper warfare, nor by critical and polemical discourses addressed to man born and bred in licence and division, stung by the guilt of sin, or craving for the food of eternal life. Learning and study and sacred literature there must be, and they have their due dignity and sphere; but there is something wrong when the Church must talk about her own claims, and authority, and powers, *i. e.*, about herself. This is rather for catechists than for preachers. It should be pre-supposed as an axiom, and wrought upon as a first principle even without enunciation. To discuss it is a sort of egotism, a self-consciousness,

which implies that something is morally wrong. Perfect health is unconscious: there is something diseased as soon as we begin to search into and reason about the functions of life. Points must be disputed or doubted, or at least cannot be self-evident, cannot be seen and felt in action and energy, if they need to be discussed and proved by syllogisms: and no syllogisms in the world will make people cling to a system which does not attest its mission by the powers and virtues which heal the spiritual wounds of mankind. Neither will any syllogism detach or estrange men from a system which they know and feel to be a source of healing and benediction to their inmost life. Let us exhibit this, and we may lay aside nine-tenths of our argumentation. What men want is a reality which will solve their own perplexed being, guide their repentance, bring them into fellowship with Christ our Redeemer, console them in sorrow, stay them up in the season of temptation, in the hour of death, in the day of judgment. If we will but give such a Church to them, they will defend it by the earnest practical controversy of loving and obeying it.

I will add only one more remark. In all earnestness, there is danger of an abrupt, unsympathising, and repulsive tone. It is the fault incident to strong characters, and especially to those that do not spare themselves. Such men often degenerate into a dryness and hardness of mind, in which they are well

able to endure opposition even with patience; but they become utterly unpersuasive and isolated. It is easy to forfeit sympathies which are hard to gain, and well nigh impossible to recover. Now there is no necessary connection between strength and sternness. Gentleness and force may well harmonise in the same mind; as in the great Exemplar there was perfect inflexibility and perfect love. The highest evidence of our entire faithfulness to our Master is the fullest exhibition of unyielding truth and of compassionate sympathy: and it will be found, after all, that it is not by superficial activity, nor dexterous management, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor intellectual power, so much as by patient listening, forbearing silence, gentleness in explanation, long endurance of unfair attacks, unchangeable kindness in word and deed, by visible sanctity, by brotherly love among ourselves, and daily intercession at the throne of God, that our separated and out-cast brethren are to be won again to Christ, and to the unity of His flock.





